

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Applicant has received the Final Office Action dated October 17, 2006, in which the Examiner rejected claims 1-30 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Zhang et al. ("K-Harmonic Means – Data Clustering Algorithm," HP Laboratories Palo Alto, October, 1999, hereinafter "Zhang"). With this Response, Applicant amends claims 1 and 2. These amendments and following arguments do not raise any new issues nor do they require further searching by the Examiner. Thus, Applicant believes this case to be allowable by the Examiner at this point.

Applicant discussed claim 1 with the Examiner on January 10, 2007. The Applicant explained that, while the Zhang reference (authored by the present inventor) refers to clustering, the Zhang reference does not teach regression, which is required by claim 1. That is, clustering and regression are distinct. Applicant submits the attached Table of Contents and Index from a textbook entitled "Applied Regression Analysis." Nowhere in the Table of Contents or in the Index of this Regression-based textbook does a reference to "clustering" exist. For at least this reason, all claims are in condition for allowance.

Additionally, in the Zhang reference, the clusters are represented by simple geometric centers. Each cluster is a subset of data surrounding a geometric point. In claim 1, however, clusters are represented by "functions" that correlate parameters of the dataset. As such, the claimed "functions" could be lines, curves, planes, hyperplanes, etc.

The Examiner suggested adding one or more limitations from claim 2 into independent claim 1 and that the Examiner would likely then allow claim 1. Applicant has amended claim 1 as provided above. The Examiner also suggested amending claim 1 to ensure compliance with § 101. The Applicant has complied by requiring a processor to perform the various actions in claim 1.

For these reasons, claim 1 and its dependent claims are allowable.

Independent claims 9 and 15 and their dependent claims are allowable for the same or similar reasons as for claim 1.

Independent claim 18 requires “regressive clustering” of datapoints and independent claims 28 requires a “regression clustering algorithm.” The Zhang reference does not teach or even suggest regressive clustering as explained above. For at least this reason, claims 18, 28 and their dependent claims are in condition for allowance.

With regard to claim 24, the Examiner quoted the claim language and again simply pointed to page 1 of the Zhang reference. Independent claim 24 requires a plurality of data sources and a central station. Each of the plurality of data sources and the central station comprise a processor. The claim further requires that the processors of the data sources and the central station “are collectively configured to mine the datapoints of the data sources as a whole without transferring all of the datapoints between the data sources and the central station.” The Applicant has reviewed page 1 of the Zhang reference, as well as the rest of the document, and simply does not find a teaching of this combination of limitations. Thus, as before the Applicant submits that claim 24 and its dependent claims are in condition for allowance. To the extent the Examiner intends to maintain this ground of rejection, the Applicant respectfully requests the Examiner to specifically identify in the Zhang reference the following limitations of claim 24:

- “plurality of data sources each having a processor”
- “central station coupled to the plurality of data sources and comprising a processor”
- “the processors of the central station and plurality of data sources are collectively configured to mine the datapoints of the data sources as a whole without transferring all of the datapoints between the data sources and the central station”

CONCLUSION

Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case. It is believed that no extensions of time or fees are required, beyond those that may otherwise be provided for in documents

Appl. No. 10/694,367
Amdt. dated January 17, 2007
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accompanying this paper. However, in the event that additional extensions of time are necessary to allow consideration of this paper, such extensions are hereby petitioned under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136(a), and any fees required (including fees for net addition of claims) are hereby authorized to be charged to Hewlett-Packard Development Company's Deposit Account No. 08-2025.

Respectfully submitted,



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